

REMARKS

The final Office Action mailed May 18, 2007 has been carefully reviewed and the foregoing amendment has been made in consequence thereof.

Claims 1, 2, 4-11, 13-38, 40-75 and 79-85 are now pending in this application. Claims 1, 2, 4-11, 13-38, 40-75 and 79-85 stand rejected.

The rejection of Claims 1, 2, 4-11, 13-18, 28-38, 40-45, 73 and 79-85 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Customer Support System (CircuitCity.com) (hereinafter referred to as "Customer Support System") in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication 2001/0053980 to Suliman, Jr. et al. (hereinafter referred to as "Suliman, Jr.") and further in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication 2001/0011225 to O'Connor et al. (hereinafter referred to as "O'Connor") is respectfully traversed.

Customer Support System describes a system for providing customer support related to product services and repairs. In the system, an authorized service provider has trained technicians ready to troubleshoot and repair a plurality of products. Notably, Customer Support System does not describe or suggest automatically providing to the user only references of service providers authorized to service or repair the product.

Suliman, Jr. describes a registration system that may be linked to a plurality of service organizations that provide maintenance and repair services for consumer products (paragraph 14). Throughout the life of a product, a consumer will preferably utilize the provided repair links to service his/her registered products (paragraph 76). By way of example only, a consumer can link to a repair shop that specializes in the particular product sought to be registered (paragraph 76). In this fashion, the consumer can schedule to bring the product in for maintenance or repair (paragraph 76). Consumers can schedule repairs and maintenance for their registered products with local service organizations at the touch of a button (paragraph 14). The registration system includes an account summary page (800) that includes a product summary field (820) in which each product registration information file is listed (paragraph 63). From this field, consumers can access information, service, repair, secondary market and other product related links (paragraph 63).

O'Connor describes an internet enabled system whereby clients may review small businesses and schedule appointments for service. Businesses are grouped into regional zones defining regions within which clients may be expected to easily travel to keep appointments. Each business presents an advertisement, and each advertisement is implemented with one or more hyperlinks. The hyperlinks may be used to make appointments.

Claim 1 recites a method of enabling scheduling of a service call in a computing environment, wherein the method including "obtaining product information regarding a product from a user of the computing environment; determining, by a first computing unit including a web browser, whether the product is serviced by a manufacturer of the product or a service provider different than the manufacturer; automatically providing to the user only references of service providers authorized to service or repair the product; automatically providing to the user, from whom the product information is obtained, at least one available appointment within a calendar schedule in real time for scheduling a service call with at least one service provider based on the product information and on said determination made by the first computing unit without interaction between the user and any other human being, and enabling the user to select one available appointment in real time for at least one service provider from the calendar schedule; and automatically providing a service call price estimate that varies based on a regional location of the user, without interaction between the user and any other human being."

None of Customer Support System, Suliman, Jr. and O'Connor, considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests a method of enabling scheduling of a service call as recited in Claim 1. More specifically, none of Customer Support System, Suliman, Jr. and O'Connor, considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests automatically providing to the user only references of service providers authorized to service or repair the product and/or automatically providing to the user, from whom the product information is obtained, at least one available appointment within a calendar schedule in real time for scheduling a service call with at least one service provider based on the product information and on said determination made by the first computing unit without interaction between the user and any other human being, and enabling the user to select one available appointment in real time for at least one service provider from the calendar schedule. Rather, Customer Support System merely describes providing a repair cost estimate for \$19.99 for a plurality of products.

Suliman, Jr. describes linking a registration system to a plurality of service organizations that provide maintenance and repair services for consumer products, utilizing the provided repair links to service the registered products and linking to a repair shop that specializes in a particular product sought to be registered. O'Connor describes an internet enabled system whereby clients may review small businesses and schedule appointments for service. While Suliman, Jr. generally describes scheduling repairs and maintenance at the touch of a button, Suliman, Jr. does not describe or suggest automatically providing to the user only references of service providers who are authorized to service or repair the product. For at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 1 is submitted to be patentable over Customer Support System in view of Suliman, Jr. and further in view of O'Connor.

Claims 2, 4-11, 13-18, 73 and 79-85 depend, directly or indirectly, from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claims 2, 4-11, 13-18, 73 and 79-85 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 2, 4-11, 13-18, 73 and 79-85 likewise are patentable over Customer Support System in view of Suliman, Jr. and further in view of O'Connor.

Claim 28 recites a system for enabling scheduling of a service call in a computing environment, wherein the system includes "at least one processor adapted to obtain product information regarding a product from a user of the computing environment; and said at least one processor adapted to: determine whether the product is serviced by a manufacturer of the product or a service provider different than the manufacturer; provide to the user only references of service providers authorized to service or repair the product; provide to the user, from whom the product information is obtained, at least one available appointment in real time for scheduling a service call, wherein the at least one available appointment is based on the product information and on the determination made by said at least one processor, and said at least one processor adapted to provide the at least one available appointment based on a determination to display the at least one available appointment within a calendar schedule in real time for scheduling the service call; and provide to the user, prior to scheduling the service call, a price estimate that varies based on a regional location of the user for the service call without interaction between the user and any other human being."

None of Customer Support System, Suliman, Jr. and O'Connor, considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests a system for enabling scheduling of a service call as recited in Claim 28. More specifically, none of Customer Support System, Suliman, Jr. and

O'Connor, considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests at least one processor adapted to provide to the user only references of service providers authorized to service or repair the product. Rather, Customer Support System merely describes providing, by an authorized service provider, a repair cost estimate for \$19.99 for a plurality of products, and Suliman, Jr. describes linking a registration system to a plurality of service organizations that provide maintenance and repair services for consumer products, utilizing the provided repair links to service the registered products and linking to a repair shop that specializes in a particular product sought to be registered. O'Connor describes an internet enabled system whereby clients may review small businesses and schedule appointments for service. While Suliman, Jr. generally describes scheduling repairs and maintenance at the touch of a button, Suliman, Jr. does not describe or suggest at least one processor adapted to provide to the user only references of service providers authorized to service or repair the product. For at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 28 is submitted to be patentable over Customer Support System in view of Suliman, Jr. and further in view of O'Connor.

Claims 29-38 and 40-45 depend, directly or indirectly, from independent Claim 28. When the recitations of Claims 29-38 and 40-45 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 28, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 29-38 and 40-45 likewise are patentable over Customer Support System in view of Suliman, Jr. and further in view of O'Connor.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 103 rejection of Claims 1, 2, 4-11, 13-18, 28-38, 40-45, 73 and 79-85 be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 19-23, 25-27, 46-72, 74 and 75 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Customer Support System in view of Suliman, Jr. is respectfully traversed.

Claim 19 recites a method of enabling scheduling of a service call for repair of a home appliance in a computing environment, wherein the method includes "obtaining product information regarding a product at a first computing unit from input of the product information by a user at a second computing unit coupled to the first computing unit via a communications network; determining, by the second computing unit including a web browser, whether the product is serviced by a manufacturer of the product or a service provider different than the manufacturer; automatically providing to the user only references

of service providers authorized to service or repair the product; automatically providing from the first computing unit to the user that input the product information at the second computing unit at least one available appointment in real time for scheduling a service call based on the product information and based on said determination made by the second computing unit, wherein said automatically providing includes providing without interaction between the user and any other human being, and said automatically providing includes providing based on a determination to display the at least one available appointment in real time within a calendar schedule for scheduling the service call; and automatically providing from the first computing unit to the user, prior to scheduling the service call, a price estimate that varies based on a regional location of the user for the service call without interaction between the user and any other human being.”

Neither Customer Support System nor Suliman, Jr., considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests a method of enabling scheduling of a service call as recited in Claim 19. More specifically, neither Customer Support System nor Suliman, Jr., considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests automatically providing to the user only references of service providers authorized to service or repair the product provided by the user. Rather, Customer Support System merely describes providing, by an authorized service provider, a repair cost estimate for \$19.99 for a plurality of products, and Suliman, Jr. describes linking a registration system to a plurality of service organizations that provide maintenance and repair services for consumer products, utilizing the provided repair links to service the registered products and linking to a repair shop that specializes in a particular product sought to be registered. While Suliman, Jr. generally describes scheduling repairs and maintenance at the touch of a button, Suliman, Jr. does not describe or suggest automatically providing to the user only references of service providers authorized to service or repair the product provided by the user. For the reasons set forth above, Claim 19 is submitted to be patentable over Customer Support System in view of Suliman, Jr.

Claims 20-23, 25-27 and 74 depend, directly or indirectly, from independent Claim 19. When the recitations of Claims 20-23, 25-27 and 74 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 19, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 20-23, 25-27 and 74 likewise are patentable over Customer Support System in view of Suliman, Jr.

Claim 46 recites a system for enabling scheduling of a service call for repair of a home appliance in a computing environment, wherein the system includes “means for

obtaining product information regarding a product at a first computing unit from input of the product information by the user at a second computing unit coupled to the first computing unit via a communications network, wherein said first computing unit includes a web browser, is configured to determine whether the product is serviced by a manufacturer of the product or a service provider different than the manufacturer; means for providing to the user only references of service providers authorized to service or repair the product; means for providing from the first computing unit to the user that input the product information at the second computing unit at least one available appointment in real time for scheduling a service call based on the product information and the determination made by said first computing unit, wherein the means for providing provides without interaction between the user and any other human being, and said means for providing provides the at least one available appointment based on a determination to display to the user the at least one available appointment within a calendar schedule in real time for scheduling the service call; and means for providing from the first computing unit to the user, prior to scheduling the service call, a price estimate that varies based on a regional location of the user for the service call without interaction between the user and any other human being.”

Neither Customer Support System nor Suliman, Jr., considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests a system for enabling scheduling of a service call as recited in Claim 46. More specifically, neither Customer Support System nor Suliman, Jr., considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests means for providing to the user only references of service providers authorized to service or repair the product provided by the user. Rather, Customer Support System merely describes providing, by an authorized service provider, a repair cost estimate for \$19.99 for a plurality of products, and Suliman, Jr. describes linking a registration system to a plurality of service organizations that provide maintenance and repair services for consumer products, utilizing the provided repair links to service the registered products and linking to a repair shop that specializes in a particular product sought to be registered. While Suliman, Jr. generally describes scheduling repairs and maintenance at the touch of a button, Suliman, Jr. does not describe or suggest means for providing to the user only references of service providers authorized to service or repair the product provided by the user. For at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 46 is submitted to be patentable over Customer Support System in view of Suliman, Jr.

Claims 47-54 depend, directly or indirectly, from independent Claim 46. When the recitations of Claims 47-54 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 46, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 47-54 likewise are patentable over Customer Support System in view of Suliman, Jr.

Claim 55 recites at least one program storage device readable by a machine, tangibly embodying at least one program of instructions executable by the machine to perform a method of enabling scheduling a service call, wherein the method includes “obtaining product information regarding a product from a user; determining, by the machine, whether the product is serviced by a manufacturer of the product or a service provider different than the manufacturer; automatically providing to the user only references of service providers authorized to service or repair the product; automatically providing to the user, from whom the product information is obtained, at least one available appointment in real time for scheduling a service call based on the product information and said determination made by the machine, wherein said automatically providing includes providing without interaction between the user and any other human being, and said automatically providing includes providing based on a determination to display the at least one available appointment within a calendar schedule in real time for scheduling the service call; and automatically providing to the user, prior to scheduling the service call, a price estimate that varies based on a regional location of the user for the service call without interaction between the user and any other human being.”

Neither Customer Support System nor Suliman, Jr., considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests a method of enabling scheduling a service call as recited in Claim 55. More specifically, neither Customer Support System nor Suliman, Jr., considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests automatically providing to the user only references of service providers authorized to service or repair the product provided by the user. Rather, Customer Support System merely describes providing, by an authorized service provider, a repair cost estimate for \$19.99 for a plurality of products, and Suliman, Jr. describes linking a registration system to a plurality of service organizations that provide maintenance and repair services for consumer products, utilizing the provided repair links to service the registered products and linking to a repair shop that specializes in a particular product sought to be registered. While Suliman, Jr. generally describes scheduling repairs and maintenance at the touch of a button, Suliman, Jr. does not describe or suggest

automatically providing to the user only references of service providers authorized to service or repair the product provided by the user. For at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 55 is submitted to be patentable over Customer Support System in view of Suliman, Jr.

Claims 56-63 depend, directly or indirectly, from independent Claim 55. When the recitations of Claims 56-63 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 55, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 56-63 likewise are patentable over Customer Support System in view of Suliman, Jr.

Claim 64 recites an article of manufacture including “at least one computer usable medium having computer readable program code means embodied therein for causing a scheduling of a service call for repair of a home appliance, the computer readable program code means in said article of manufacture comprising: computer readable program code means for causing a computer to obtain product information regarding a product at a first computing unit from input of the product information by the user at a second computing unit coupled to the first computing unit via a communications network; computer readable program code means for causing a computer to determine whether the product is serviced by a manufacturer of the product or a service provider different than the manufacturer; computer readable program code means for automatically providing to the user only references of service providers authorized to service or repair the product; computer readable program code means for causing a computer to provide from the first computing unit to the user that input the product information at the second computing unit at least one available appointment in real time for scheduling a service call based on the product information and the determination made by the computer readable program code means for causing a computer to determine whether the product is serviced by the manufacturer of the product or the service provider different than the manufacturer, and said computer readable program code means for causing a computer to provide the at least one available appointment causes a computer to provide the at least one available appointment based on a determination to display the at least one available appointment within a calendar schedule in real time for scheduling the service call; and computer readable program code means for causing a computer to provide from the first computing unit to the user, prior to scheduling the service call, a price estimate that varies based on a regional location of the user for the service call without interaction between the user and any other human being.”

Neither Customer Support System nor Suliman, Jr., considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests an article of manufacture as recited in Claim 64. More specifically, neither Customer Support System nor Suliman, Jr., considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests computer readable program code means for automatically providing to the user only references of service providers authorized to service or repair the product provided by the customer. Rather, Customer Support System merely describes providing, by an authorized service provider, a repair cost estimate for \$19.99 for a plurality of products, and Suliman, Jr. describes linking a registration system to a plurality of service organizations that provide maintenance and repair services for consumer products, utilizing the provided repair links to service the registered products and linking to a repair shop that specializes in a particular product sought to be registered. While Suliman, Jr. generally describes scheduling repairs and maintenance at the touch of a button, Suliman, Jr. does not describe or suggest a computer readable program code means for automatically providing to the user only references of service providers authorized to service or repair the product provided by the user. For at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 64 is submitted to be patentable over Customer Support System in view of Suliman, Jr.

Claims 65-72 depend, directly or indirectly, from independent Claim 64. When the recitations of Claims 65-72 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 64, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 65-72 likewise are patentable over Customer Support System in view of Suliman, Jr.

Claim 28 recites a system for enabling scheduling of a service call in a computing environment including “at least one processor adapted to obtain product information regarding a product from a user of the computing environment; and said at least one processor adapted to: determine whether the product is serviced by a manufacturer of the product or a service provider different than the manufacturer; provide to the user only references of service providers authorized to service or repair the product; provide to the user, from whom the product information is obtained, at least one available appointment in real time for scheduling a service call, wherein the at least one available appointment is based on the product information and on the determination made by said at least one processor, and said at least one processor adapted to provide the at least one available appointment based on a determination to display the at least one available appointment within a calendar schedule in real time for scheduling the service call; and provide to the user, prior to scheduling the

service call, a price estimate that varies based on a regional location of the user for the service call without interaction between the user and any other human being.”

Neither Customer Support System or Suliman, Jr., considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests a system for enabling scheduling of a service call as recited in Claim 28. More specifically, neither Customer Support System nor Suliman, Jr., considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests at least one processor adapted to provide to the user only references of service providers authorized to service or repair the product. Rather, Customer Support System merely describes providing, by an authorized service provider, a repair cost estimate for \$19.99 for a plurality of products, and Suliman, Jr. describes linking a registration system to a plurality of service organizations that provide maintenance and repair services for consumer products, utilizing the provided repair links to service the registered products and linking to a repair shop that specializes in a particular product sought to be registered. For at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 28 is submitted to be patentable over Customer Support System in view of Suliman, Jr.

Claim 75 depends directly from independent Claim 28. When the recitations of claim 75 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 28, Applicants submit that dependent Claim 75 likewise is patentable over Customer Support System in view of Suliman, Jr.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 103 rejection of Claims 19-23, 25-27, 46-72, 74 and 75 be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claim 24 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Customer Support System in view of Suliman, Jr. and in further view of Somheil (“Bringing Good Things to Market”) (hereinafter referred to as “Somheil”) is respectfully traversed.

Customer Support System and Suliman, Jr. are described above. Somheil describes a web site that enables users to access information on and purchase GE Appliances products. The web site further allows a user to access the user’s purchase history with GE. Notably, Somheil does not describe or suggest automatically providing from a first computing unit to a user, prior to scheduling a service call, a price estimate that varies based on a regional location of the user for the service call without interaction between the user and any other human being.

Claim 24 depends from independent Claim 19, which recites a method of enabling scheduling of a service call for repair of a home appliance in a computing environment including “obtaining product information regarding a product at a first computing unit from input of the product information by a user at a second computing unit coupled to the first computing unit via a communications network; determining, by the second computing unit including a web browser, whether the product is serviced by a manufacturer of the product or a service provider different than the manufacturer; automatically providing to the user only references of service providers authorized to service or repair the product; automatically providing from the first computing unit to the user that input the product information at the second computing unit at least one available appointment in real time for scheduling a service call based on the product information and based on said determination made by the second computing unit, wherein said automatically providing includes providing without interaction between the user and any other human being, and said automatically providing includes providing based on a determination to display the at least one available appointment in real time within a calendar schedule for scheduling the service call; and automatically providing from the first computing unit to the user, prior to scheduling the service call, a price estimate that varies based on a regional location of the user for the service call without interaction between the user and any other human being.”

None of Customer Support System, Suliman, Jr. and Somheil, considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests a method of enabling scheduling of a service call as recited in Claim 19. More specifically, none of Customer Support System, Suliman, Jr. and Somheil considered alone or in combination, describes or suggests automatically providing to the user only references of service providers authorized to service or repair the product provided by the user. Rather, Customer Support System merely describes providing, by an authorized service provider, a repair cost estimate for \$19.99 for a plurality of products. Suliman, Jr. describes linking a registration system to a plurality of service organizations that provide maintenance and repair services for consumer products, utilizing the provided repair links to service the registered products and linking to a repair shop that specializes in a particular product sought to be registered. Somheil merely describes a merchant website that enables a user to preview and purchase products.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 19 is submitted to be patentable over Customer Support System in view of Suliman, Jr. and in further view of Somheil.

Claim 24 depends directly from independent Claim 19. When the recitations of Claim 24 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 19, Applicants submit that dependent Claim 24 likewise is patentable over Customer Support System in view of Suliman, Jr. and further in view of Somheil.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 103 rejection of Claim 24 be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, this application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



Eric T. Krischke
Reg. No.: 42,769
Armstrong Teasdale LLP
One Metropolitan Square, Suite 2600
St. Louis, MO 63102
314-621-5070